



New Wave Reprise

Friday April 5, 2019

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MUSIC DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE FROM DAY ONE

New music of the moment has been the core ingredient in Esprit Orchestra programming from day one, with the commissioning of young professional composers being its essence. While this has applied to our main concert series over the years, it has been even more central in our New Wave festivals and Creative Sparks mentoring projects. This has produced an extraordinary history of exploration for Esprit audiences, musicians, and for the composers who have benefited from these experiences in the early years of their significant careers.

I am particularly pleased that John Rea, the first composer ever commissioned by Esprit, is with us to link tonight's New Wave events with those of past, as well as future, festivals. Over the years, he has frequently offered us ingenious, illuminating, thought provoking words that have challenged composers and propelled them forward in musical thought. As an artist, thinker, teacher and philosopher, his positive influence on the world of Canadian composition is remarkable.

Tonight's concert of world premieres honours Esprit's tradition and moves us forward in our mission to foster transformational musical influences that reach and inspire more people. The composers' voices assembled this evening reflect how diverse the world of new music is in Canada. We embrace this in our programming.

We're especially happy to always be working with young people, be they early career professionals, university students or youth in high schools. But in New Wave events, we forthrightly aim to establish long-term musical relationships and engage young professionals in a cascade of activity that includes not only commissioning them, but engaging them as mentors in Creative Sparks projects, especially as we see school curriculums increasingly marginalize music and the arts.

In recharging our New Wave activities each year, we celebrate innovation and provide fertile ground for young composers to musically illuminate the present through tantalizing, vital, exhilarating and compelling music. More than anything, I hope the reverberations of tonight's concert stay with you for a long time so that you will have a strong connection when, in the future, you hear more music by tonight's excellent musical creators.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Alex Pauk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Alex" and last name "Pauk" clearly distinguishable.

Alex Pauk, C.M.
Founding Music Director

New Wave Reprise

ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

ALEX PAUK, Music Director and Conductor

Friday April 5, 2019 | Trinity St. Paul's Centre

Alex Pauk – Conductor

Eugene Astapov – Guest Conductor

Alison Yun-Fei Jiang – Guest Conductor

GUEST ARTISTS

Amahl Arulanandam - Cello

- 7:00pm** **Keynote Address by John Rea**
Dialogue of the Wind and Sea: Composers Talking to Composers
- 7:20pm** **Panel Discussion with Composers**
- 8:00pm** **Concert**

PROGRAM

- Christina Volpini** *as within, so without* (2019)**
(Canada)
- Quinn Jacobs** *Music About Music* (2019)**
(Canada)
- Bekah Simms** *Foreverdark* (2019)**
(Canada)

INTERMISSION

- Alison Yun-Fei Jiang** *Temporal* (2019)*
(Canada)
- Eugene Astapov** *Emblem* (2019)**
(Canada)

*World Premiere commissioned by Esprit Orchestra

World Premiere commissioned by Esprit with generous support from **Ontario Arts Council

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ESPRIT ORCHESTRA

Alex Pauk, Music Director and Conductor

VIOLIN

Stephen Sitarski, *concertmaster*
Bethany Bergman

BASSOON

Jerry Robinson

VIOLA

Carolyn Blackwell

HORN

Bardhyl Gjevori

CELLO

Paul Widner

TRUMPET

Brendan Cassin

BASS

Hans Preuss

TROMBONE

David Archer

FLUTE

Maria Pelletier

PIANO

Stephen Clarke

OBOE

Clare Scholtz

HARP

Sanya Eng

CLARINET

Colleen Cook

PERCUSSION

Ryan Scott

ALEX PAUK

Founding Music Director and Conductor

Alex Pauk was inducted into the Order of Canada on September 23rd, 2015. Pauk has revitalized orchestral life for composers across Canada by founding Esprit Orchestra in 1983 and devoting the organization to new music. Through building and sustaining Esprit's high calibre performances, commissioning program, innovative programming (70% Canadian), recordings, outreach projects, national and international tours, and multimedia ventures, Pauk has been a leader in developing and promoting Canadian music at home and abroad.

As a conductor, he attains excellent performances on stage and in recordings. Pauk's commissioning of Canadian composers of all ages and stylistic trends is central to his work. In 2007, Pauk was a recipient of the Canada Council for the Arts Molson Prize, awarded to those who contribute to the cultural and intellectual heritage of Canada. Pauk's commitment to the community through Esprit has also garnered SOCAN and Chalmers Awards, as well as three Lieutenant Governor's Arts Awards. Under Pauk's direction, Esprit was awarded the 2005 Vida Peene Award for excellent standards of performance and programming.

In addition to his work as a conductor, Alex Pauk has a prolific career as a composer, having written music for every kind of performing ensemble. Pauk has composed for and conducted more than sixty works for organizations such as the Société de musique contemporaine du Québec, CBC Vancouver Orchestra, New Music Concerts, Vancouver New Music Society, the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, and Esprit Orchestra.

Pauk graduated from the University of Toronto Faculty of Music in 1971. He currently resides in Toronto with his wife, Alexina Louie, who is his vital partner in the development of Esprit Orchestra.

STEPHEN SITARSKI

Concertmaster

Stephen SitarSKI enjoys an incredibly varied career as a violinist and conductor, and has built an excellent reputation nationally in performances of Baroque music through to jazz and modern. He is also a recognized conductor, adjudicator, music administrator, and teacher. In the contemporary classical music realm, Mr. SitarSKI has been on three tours of the United States with Art of Time Ensemble, the last being February 2018 with singer, songwriter, and guitarist Steven Page. He is also a regular member of Toronto New Music Concerts, Arraymusic, and Soundstreams, the last of which included a tour in May 2012 of Taiwan and China, performing works by Tan Dun and R. Murray Schafer.

As a soloist, Mr. SitarSKI frequently appears with many concertos in the standard repertoire as well as concertos written especially for him by Canadian composers such as Kelly-Marie Murphy and Glenn Buhr. In April 2019, he will perform Prokofiev's *Violin Concerto No. 2* with the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra, where he also serves as Concertmaster. Mr. SitarSKI is also Concertmaster of Esprit Orchestra, and held the same position with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony (KWS) for 15 seasons (1997 – 2012). In summer 2018, he served as Concertmaster for the orchestra performing the Mirvish Production of *The King and I*. Stephen has also been guest concertmaster across Canada and abroad.

Mr. SitarSKI has also added conducting to his roster of duties, having conducted the Mississauga and Georgian Bay Symphonies. Routinely heard throughout Canada on disc and on live radio broadcasts, SitarSKI has also performed countless television and film scores. Stephen has always maintained a hand at mentoring and teaching; he will mark his 15th year on a faculty of the National Youth Orchestra of Canada. In recognition of this, he was previously awarded the Queen's Jubilee Medal, a nomination submitted by the NYOC. In previous years, Stephen taught at Wilfrid Laurier University, the Glenn Gould School of the Royal Conservatory of Music, and the Banff Centre for the Arts.

He is an advocate for the mental and physical health of musicians, and has given talks about the mental strain of a musician's life. He was profiled in the April 2018 edition of The WholeNote magazine.

AM AHL ARULANANDAM

Cello Soloist

With tastes ranging from baroque music to death metal, Toronto-based cellist Amahl Arulanandam is known for his musical versatility. Feeling at home in studios, small clubs and large concert-halls, Amahl hopes to convey that musical expression is beyond genres and labels.

In the “classical” realm of Toronto, Amahl is quickly becoming known as a strong advocate for the music of our time, performing with ensembles such as Soundstreams, New Music Concerts, Tapestry Opera, FAWN Chamber Creative, Caution-Tape Sound Collective, Thin-Edge New Music Collective (TENMC), Music in the Barns and Esprit Orchestra, and regular appearances at the 21C Music Festival. He has worked closely with leading composers such as Salvatore Sciarrino, Ana Sokolovic, Luna Pearl Woolf, Brian Current and John Rea.

As a soloist and chamber musician, Amahl has presented several recitals and performed alongside artists such as David Geringas, Robert Aitken, John Novacek, Steven Dann, Angela Cheng, Mark Fewer, James Campbell and Jeffrey Beecher. He has toured the US with Matt Haimovitz’ all-cello ensemble, Uccello and been a featured artist at the Salzburg Chamber Music Festival, Ottawa Chamberfest and Sweetwater Music Festival. He was a semi-finalist in the 2015 Eckhardt-Gramatte National Music Competition, and performed Barber’s Cello Concerto with the McGill Symphony Orchestra in the fall of 2014. Arulanandam is a co-founder VC2 Cello Duo alongside friend and colleague, Bryan Holt, which just completed a tour of the Atlantic provinces under the banner of Debut Atlantic. Future endeavours include a tour of the Prairies with VC2 in 2019/20, presented by Prairie Debut.

Amahl completed his undergraduate studies in 2012 at the University of Toronto where he received the Gabriella Dory Prize and Suba Institute Award as top graduating performance major. He received his Master’s from the McGill University where he, as part of the Strathcona Piano Trio, won the 2013 chamber music competition, and was runner up in the 2014 concerto competition. He wrapped up his studies at the Glenn Gould School where he received an Artist’s Diploma and was winner of the 2015 chamber music competition.

PROGRAM NOTES

CHRISTINA VOLPINI *as within, so without* (2019)

Composer's Note:

The title of the work is drawn from the Hermetic Principle of Correspondence: "As above, so below; as below, so above. As within, so without; as without, so within." This principle attempts to articulate a Hermetic "truth" that there is correspondence between the laws and phenomena of planes that overlay one another. Examining what exists in a layer above or below may infer the pattern or shadow nature of what is in-between.

In particular, the work imagines the rich inner world that exists in this "in-between". Harmonies, rhythms and orchestration all emanate from the harp part at the core of the work. The piece intends to create a vibrant, shimmering texture, a magnified microcosm that might exist within one player's part.

QUINN JACOBS *Music About Music* (2019)

Composer's Note:

What are we writing for?

Adding sounds to the blaring
expanse
Finding people lost, not found
Mounds of notes gathering
moss

Not floating around like they
were in France

Writing stories in a language
everyone can hear but none
can understand
A sentence without words, a
tale with no plot
It seems we have forgotten the
purpose of this art
These thoughts
If not to see the connections
between all forms
To soak the channels of life
with the nectar of being
Does not even breathing cease
to have meaning?

What are you listening for?

If you think the sounds reveal
something concrete
You're ignoring their ceilings
and their floors
Trying to glean their
significance
Like they can speak for
themselves and open their own
doors
When in reality that's what
you're here for

You have the hands, the ears,
the mind
You have the arms, the mouth,
the eyes
It is you who creates value in

this world
Not the art you peruse nor the
people who brought it this far
Your viewpoint is the truth, no
matter how you choose to use it
For in this life few things appear
as they are
Not least of all that illusion you
call music

BEKAH SIMMS
***Foreverdark* (2019)**

Composers Note:

Foreverdark both references the song with a similar name (*Foreverdark Woods* by Viking metal artist Bathory) as well as the composer's long and somewhat nostalgic relationship to the metal genre itself. This cello concertino (short concerto) uses short melodic, harmonic, and rhythmic quotations from a variety of heavy metal sources, ranging from the aforementioned Bathory, to industrial Canadian metal band Strapping Young Lad, to Armenian-American nu metal band System of a Down. Each of these groups enjoyed a level of popularity during the composer's early teens, and experienced a renewed interest from the composer in her mid-20s. Additional stylistic elements of the various genres are also present, including

perfect fifth (power chord) saturation, drum set allusions, and distorted/heavy sounds.

A special thank you to Dan Tapper, who designed and implemented the live electronics for this piece.

ALISON YUN-FEI JIANG
***Temporal* (2019)**

Composer's Note:

By cycling and recapitulating melodies and sounds, *Temporal* evokes a fragile dream-like state, where the perception of time, events and memories is fragmented.

EUGENE ASTAPOV
***Emblem* (2019)**

Composer's Note:

Tonight's work – *Emblem* – is the culmination of several years of my research into the aesthetic aspects of Russian music – a cultural body which I refer to in association with my own artistic language and instincts. A substantial amount of Russian music is defined by the melodic development that uses stepwise motion – particularly that of S. Rachmaninoff, A. Borodin, M. Mussorgsky, N. Medtner and

many other composers. I found this connection to be related to the deep knowledge of psalmodic music that the aforementioned composers possessed. Psalmodic music in its turn genealogically takes root in the music of ancient pagan rites and evidently was heavily influenced by chants performed in pre-Christian Russia.

I, too, have subconsciously relied on stepwise motion in harmonic and motivic development of my music, but in this work it is carefully crafted and incorporated into the musical fabric and individual instrumental lines, thus creating an intricate tapestry of musical segments interacting with each other and giving life to new musical seeds. The opening of the work stems out of a single note, slowly crawling into the nebula of chromatic harmony. At the most important focal point of the piece, the bassoon takes over the orchestra to finally introduce and reveal an excerpt from an ancient chant, a chant possibly attributed to the ancient Slavs and performed as a weeping ritual. This chant is presented as the heart of this composition, reoccurring in various reiterations and instrument combinations, thus making it the emblem of the work. The

character of the piece reveals breathing and sighing patterns throughout and it was important to underline the metaphor of the heart – the idea musicians will keep in mind tonight when performing the piece and molding the sounds.

The piece is approximately 8 minutes long and is a product of a year-long planning and meticulous orchestration.

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after the concert using
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Announcement
2019-2020 C

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6**

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February
26**

THE DATE

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Concert Dates!

at
er Hall

2019
Sunday
December
1

2020
Sunday
March
22

CHRISTINA VOLPINI

Christina Volpini is a composer whose music has been described as “richly textural, physical, and affecting.” Inspired by the patterning of natural and mechanical sonic environments, her work explores found objects, sonic spatialization, rich textures, and the unfolding of small changes over time. Her music has gained recognition through performances and commissions by Esprit Orchestra, Array Ensemble, Unheard Of Ensemble, and the McGill Contemporary Music Ensemble with performances in Toronto, Montréal, Edmonton, New York and throughout the U.S. east coast. Christina is a core organizer of the Toronto Creative Music Lab, a grassroots professional development workshop for early-career artists promoting peer mentorship, collaboration, and social responsibility.

Originally from Niagara Falls, Christina is currently based in Hamilton, Ontario. She holds a Masters in Music Composition from McGill University where she studied with John Rea. She has also studied with Ana Sokolović, Martin Arnold, David

Lang, and James Rolfe in the context of workshops. The creation of Christina’s music has been supported by the Ontario Arts Council, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, and the Centre for Interdisciplinary Research in Music Media and Technology. Christina is also works as an arts administrator at the Hamilton Philharmonic Orchestra.

QUINN JACOBS

Quinn is a Toronto-based composer, performer, arts administrator, and educator. His works evoke undulating dreamscapes of sound and movement, guiding audiences through the interconnected wildernesses of music, dance, theatre, and ritual.

Quinn composes for ensembles and organizations of all sizes and varieties, and has recently worked with the Esprit Orchestra, Angela Blumberg Dance Productions, 90th Parallel Productions, NOW Ensemble, Thinkin’ Big Band, and the Jong Nederlands Blazers Ensemble. His works have been performed in Toronto, Montreal, Halifax, Boston, Chicago, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Helsinki, Saas-Fee,

and other cities in North America and Europe.

In addition to individual commissions, Quinn has been a key member of arts organizations in Toronto. He is the founder and artistic director of Din of Shadows, an experimental music theatre company that commissions and produces interdisciplinary works by Canadian creators. As well, in 2016 and 2017 he served as the composer-in-residence for The Secret Shakespeare Series, a theatre company for which he scored five plays.

Quinn has also been active throughout his career as a guitarist and bassist, performing in jazz, soul, rock, and pop groups in Toronto, Boston, and The Netherlands. He currently performs with soul singer Nick Price, psychedelic rock bands Drago Dit Dragon and Human Magic, and wedding/ corporate group Supersonic Hearts Band. When not making art, Quinn works as a teacher's assistant (music theory and ear training) at the University of Toronto, and teaches guitar, bass, ukulele, piano, and music theory at small music academies around the city. He is also developing an educational music theory card game to address the difficulties that young musicians have

comprehending the vast and abstract world of music theory.

Quinn has a BMus in Performance and Jazz Composition from Boston's Berklee College of Music, an MMus in Composition from The Netherlands' Utrecht Conservatory, and is currently pursuing a DMA in Composition at the University of Toronto. He is represented by the Society of Composers, Authors and Music Publishers of Canada (SOCAN), and has received grants from the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) and SOCAN Foundation. More at quinnjacobs.com.

BEKAH SIMMS

JUNO Award-nominated composer Bekah Simms' varied output has been heralded as "nuanced and complex" (NOW Magazine) and "cacophonous, jarring, oppressive — and totally engrossing" (CBC Music). Propelled equally by fascination and terror toward the universe, her work is often filtered through the personal lens of her anxiety. Foremost among her current compositional interests is quotation and the friction between recognizability and complete obfuscation.

Bekah hails from St. John's, Newfoundland but is currently Toronto-based. Her music has been featured across Canada, in over a dozen American states, Italy, Germany, Austria, and the UK and interpreted by a diverse range of top-tier performers including Esprit Orchestra, Continuum Contemporary Music, the Victoria Symphony Orchestra, the Madawaska Quartet, TorQ Percussion Quartet, and Duo Concertante. She's also the co-founder and co-artistic director of Caution Tape Sound Collective with August Murphy-King, with whom she has presented concerts of new boundary-pushing repertoire since 2015.

ALISON YUN-FEI JIANG

Canadian composer Alison Yun-Fei Jiang (b. 1992) draws inspirations and fuses influences from sources such as landscapes, poetry, literature, film music, Chinese traditional opera, and Buddhism, creating music with melodic gestures in a dramatic, epic, and colorful nature.

Alison's music has been recognized by awards from the SOCAN Foundation, the Graham Sommer Competition

for Young Composers, ASCAP, the American Prize, and International Alliance for Women in Music. In addition, her music has been performed and workshopped by groups and ensembles such as the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Esprit Orchestra, JACK Quartet, Imani Winds, and the Wet Ink Ensemble. Her music has been heard in USA, Canada, and Europe, featured in music festivals and summer programs including the HighSCORE Music Festival, the Atlantic Music Festival, FUBiS Summer Composition Course, and Oregon Bach Festival Composers' Symposium.

Alison holds degrees in music composition from Manhattan School of Music (B.M.) and New York University (M.M.), and is a current Ph.D. candidate in music composition at University of Chicago.

EUGENE ASTAPOV

One of the brightest young voices of Canadian new music, Eugene Astapov is a composer whose music combines the "richness of harmony" (*New York Times*) with a "haunting and soothing" narrative atmosphere (*Calgary Herald*). A graduate of The Juilliard School

who studied with Christopher Rouse and Robert Beaser, Astapov has shared his music with audiences of different nationalities and backgrounds around the globe. The stages of New York's Lincoln Center, the Salle Cortot in Paris, the National Arts Center in Ottawa, Grafenegg Festival in Vienna, Sejong Hall in Seoul, the Banff Center (where he was 2014 Composer in Residence), and the Ravinia Music Festival are a few venues among many others at which his work has been performed. In 2019 Eugene is scheduled to appear as composer fellow at the Intimacy of Creativity – one of the world's foremost new music festivals taking place at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

As a prolific creator of music for large orchestral forces, Astapov's music has been read and performed by major orchestras and ensembles including the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, Vancouver Symphony Orchestra, Tonkünstler Orchester, Victoria Symphony, Thunder Bay Symphony, Moravian Philharmonic, Esprit Orchestra, the Juilliard Orchestra, the Eastman Philharmonia and L'Orchestre de la Francophonie Canadienne, which enabled

him to introduce his music to conductors including Peter Oundjian, Bramwell Tovey, Joel Sachs, Tania Miller, Paul Haas, Jeff Milarsky and Jean-Philippe Tremblay, to name a few.

In addition to his orchestral works, Astapov is an active composer of solo and chamber music, and is currently working on *Contemplations*, a project that creates sets of pieces for various solo instruments. His solo music has been recorded at the TelDec studios in Hamburg, Germany and released on that label. Dr. Astapov's artistic activity is supported in part by the Canada Council for the Arts, the SOCAN Foundation, the Ontario Arts Council, and the University of Toronto where he completed his doctoral studies under the advisorship of Christos Hatzis and Gary Kulesha.

Today's concert marks Eugene's fifth appearance with Esprit Orchestra.

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 28, 2019. Please contact the Esprit
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